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WROCLAW AS A LARGE SIGHTSEEING CENTER

WROCLAW, GRAND CENTRE CHOROGRAPHIQUE

WROCLAW JAKO WIELKIE CENTRUM KRAJOZNAWCZE

Wrocław, the fourth most populated town in Poland, is set in the centre of Lower Silesia, at the mouths of Oława, Ślęza, Bystrzyca and Widawa rivers, tributaries of the Odra River, at a distance of 100–150 km from the Sudetes Mountains. The town is a major regional center of industry, science and culture. There were 642,300 inhabitants in Wrocław in 1989. In 1988 the state economy employed 265,300 workers, 81,600 in industry, 33,200 in construction, 15,200 in transportation, and 26,400 in commerce.

Wrocław was considered by the Polish Indicative Tourist Plan, as one of the most important localities and touristic areas with which each inhabitant of our country should have been acquainted at school, and which should be an important goal for foreign tourism.

The localities included in the first category are called "large sight-seeing centres". The paper presents the elements of Wrocław's touristic attractiveness and its present touristic utilization.

Wrocław in one of the largest communication junctions in the country. 12 main road routes and 9 railway lines cross here. A number of important international roads also pass through Wrocław: the E 40 from Dunkirk to Lvov and Kharkov, and the E 67 from Prague to Warsaw. In addition there are major railways linking Western, Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, including lines from Berlin, Frankfurt-am-Main, Munich, Prague, Budapest, Bucharest, Burgas, Lvov, Kiev, and Moscow. Wrocław possesses an airport as well as river harbours, the Odra river being connected with the West Europe an waterway system.

Wrocław has rich and differentiated touristic attractions and numerous architectural monuments, interesting museums and exhibitions as

well as landscape and natural features. The tourist attraction of the town is increased by a wealth of cultural and folkloristic spectacles, theatres and concert halls and the possibilities of Odra River trips.

Table I

The most important architectural monuments in Wrocław
Les plus importants monuments de l'architecture à Wrocław

Objects of European significance

Cathedral Island:

Cathedral Church of St. John Baptist

Collegiate Church of St. Cross with lower Church of Byzantium — Ukraine of St. Cross

Sand Island:

Augustinian Convent, Holy Virgin Mary Church and convent building Old and New Town:

The Jesuit College (University at present)

Town Hall

Objects of general national significance

Cathedral Island:

Building of Chapter

Old and New Town:

Cathedral Church of St. Mary Magdalena

Garrison Church of St. Elizabeth (being reconstructed)

The Convent of Crusaders with Red Star (presently the Ossolineum Library)

St. Vincent Church (reconstructed)

The Dominican Convent with St. Adalberth Church

The Franciscan Church of St. Stanislaw, St. Wacław, and St. Dorota

Church of Knights of St. John of Jerusalem

Old Exchange

The tenement-houses in Rynek: Pod Gryfami, Pod Złotym Słońcem, Siedmiu Elektorów, Kuźnicza Street, Pod Srebrnym Hełmem, Solny Square

Source: Łoziński, Miłobędzki, 1967.

The most important architectural monuments according to Łoziński and Miłobędzki (1967) are presented by Table I. 5 buildings or building complexes are included as objects of European significance, and a further 14 are included as objects of national significance. There is a particular concentration of monuments in the Old Town and on Cathedral Island (Ostrów Tumski). The complex of representative Gothic buildings (among other things the Town Hall and Cathedral) belongs to one of the largest not only in Poland but also in Europe. In the group of more recent architectonic objects the People's Hall should be mentioned. It was built in 1912—1913 and is one of the world's first gigantic reinforced concrete constructions.

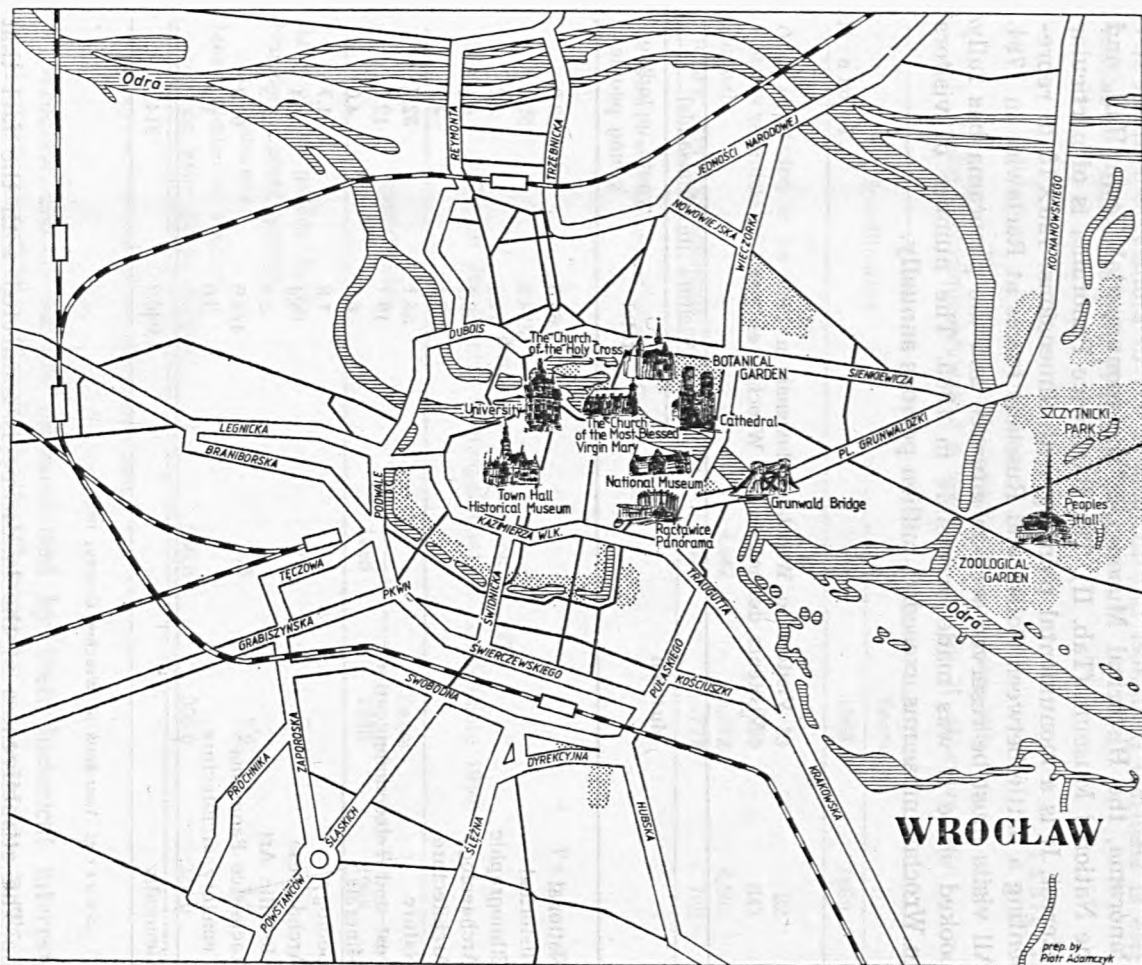


Fig. 1. Wrocław. Map of the city centre

Dessin 1. Wrocław. Plan de la ville

Among 13 museums the most frequently visited are: the Raclawice Panorama, the Historical Museum in the monumental Town Hall, and the National Museum (Tab. II). The Raclawice Panorama is of particular interest. It is a monumental painting with dimensions: 120×15 m representing a battle between Polish and Russians forces at Raclawice in 1794. All visits must be reserved well in advance and the panorama has fully booked since it was made accessible in 1985. The number of visitors to Wrocław museums exceeds 1 million persons annually.

Table II

Visitors to Wrocław Museums in 1989
Visiteurs des musées de Wrocław en 1989

Museum	Visitors (in thousands)	
	total	youth including young people
National	66.5	22.0
Historical	314.8	50.5
Ethnographic	11.5	5.2
Archaeology	28.2	6.9
Architecture	37.1	4.1
Nature	53.1	32.7
Post and Telecommunications	19.1	12.0
Minerals	6.0	4.0
Geology	1.8	1.7
Archdiocese	18.4	3.4
Medallic Art	5.3	2.5
Raclawice Panorama	475.9	68.0
Cemetery architecture	3.0	1.5
Generally	1,040.7	214.5

Source: *Year-book of Wrocław County, 1990.*

The attractiveness of the landscape is connected with the fact that the town is situated on the Odra River and tributaries with a large number of picturesque bridges (over 90), including the unique Suspension Grunwald Bridge, and large green areas.

Among the 23 parks, Szczytnicki Park is of particular significance because of its differentiated tree cover. It is the fourth park in Europe in this respect. The Zoological and Botanical Gardens also possess natural attractions. The zoo is the largest in Poland and one of the largest in Europe. The Botanical Garden is also one of the largest in the country.

The number of visitors to the Zoological and Botanical Gardens is estimated as 1 million a year (Tab. III, IV).

Table III

The Wrocław Zoological Garden (on 31 XII)
Jardin Zoologique Municipal à Wrocław (état au 31 décembre 1989)

Specification	Years		
	1985	1988	1989
Area of garden in ha	32	33	32
Species of animals	612	689	643
Animals	4,442	5,372	4,502
Tickets sold (in thousands)	518	777	788

Source: Year-book of Wrocław County, 1990.

Table IV

Botanical Garden (on 31 XII)
Jardin des Plantes Municipal (état au 31 décembre 1989)

Specification	Years		
	1985	1988	1989
Area of the garden in ha	7.1	7.1	7.1
Number of plant species in thousands	7.2	7.2	7.2
Mean number of visitors during year (in thousands)	350.0	300.0	350.0

Source: Year-book of Wrocław County, 1990.

Wrocław cemeteries are characterized by their historical interest, particularly the Jewish Cemetery, the Cemetery — mausoleum Russian Soldiers, the Cemetery of Polish Soldiers and the St. Lawrence Cemetery.

Wrocław is the largest cultural centre of the Odra River Region. There are 11 active theatres and musical institutions (Tab. V), and numerous cultural and folkloristic events are organized here (Tab. VI). Among theatres, the best known are: the Pantomima Theatre directed by H. Tomaszewski and the Laboratory Theatre with J. Grotowski as director. In 1989 the Opera, Operetta, Philharmonic and Puppet Theatres had the largest audiences. Among theatrical and musical festivals of

the greatest European fame is the „Oratorio-Cantata Festival „Wratislavia Cantans” (Tab. VI).

Table V

Theatres and musical institutions (1989)
Théâtres et établissements de musique (1989)

Specification	Places	Audience (in thousands)
Polski Theatre	1,212	55.3
Kameralny Theatre	301	40.0
Współczesny Theatre	317	67.2
Wrocław Theatre of Pantomime		19.7
Wrocław Theatre of Puppets	297	74.9
Second Studio of Wrocław	30	2.0
Centre of Open Theatre „Kalambur”		
Scene:		
Large	96	13.8
Small	48	3.4
State Opera		
Scene:		
Large	700	101.8
Small	120	0.6
Wrocław Operetta	600	96.3
State Philharmonic	501	88.1
Cantores Minores Wratislavienses		13.0
Total	4,222	576.1

Source: Year-book of Wrocław County, 1990.

Numerous itineraries and programmes for visiting the town, based on above mentioned touristic values, have been proposed.

Czerwiński (1989) worked out 8 itineraries of several hours each; Cetwiński (1985) prepared 6 perambulations. Taking into account the existence of interesting excursions in the vicinity of Wrocław, Czerwiński proposes 6 trips by car to Brzeg, Henryków, Lubiąż, Milicz, Oleśnica, Sobótka and Trzebnica; one needs at least a 3 days' stay in Wrocław to complete these.

There are 5,000 beds available in Wrocław throughout the year (Tab. VII). Among the 20 accommodation facilities, excluding guest rooms, there are in principle all the most important kinds of accommodation sought by tourists from hotels to camp sites. In the 1980s there was a noticeable and continuous decrease in the number of beds available for tourists (Tab. IX). The catering business is represented by 61 restau-

Table VI

Festivals, fairs and cultural events
Festivals, foires et festins

Month	Kind of spectacle
February	Festival of Polish Contemporary Music; „Musica Polonica Nova” (every two years)
March	Review of Actors Song
April	Jazz Festival „Jazz nad Odrą”; Polish Youth Review of the Song
May	The Wrocław Days; Piast Fair; „Cepeliada”
May-June	Festival of Polish Contemporary Plays
July	Wrocław Flower Festival
September	International Oratoris-Cantata Festival „Wratislavia Cantans”; Wrocław Days of Tourism; International Meeting of Open-Theatre; Wrocław Garden Fairs; Trzebnica Orchards Festival
October	Jazz Film Saloon; International Triennale of Drawings
November	Polish Meetings of Musiciens Families
December	Days of Music of Old Masters (each two years)

Source: Czerwiński, 1989.

Table VII

Touristic facilities in Wrocław (situation at 31 XII 1989)
Base de couchage a Wrocław (état au 31 décembre 1989)

Kind of facilities	Number of facilities	Number of beds	
		whole year	season
Hotels	8	1,916	—
Motels	1	144	—
Houses of excursions	5	370	—
Youth shelters	2	115	—
Camp sites	2	52	479
Guests room:			
state-owned		85	—
private		1,390	—
Other facilities	2	158	360
Total	20	4,230	839

Source: Year-book of Wrocław County, 1990.

rants, bars and cafés with dining facilities for 6,200 (Tab. VIII). The largest number of seats are in cafe's, with 2,600 and in restaurants, with 2,300.

Table VIII

Catering facilities in Wrocław (situation at 31 VIII 1989)
 Base gastronomique offerte aux touristes à Wrocław
 (état au 31 août 1989)

Kind of facilities	Number of facilities	Number of gastronomic places
Restaurants	20	2,303
Bars	18	1,274
Cafés	23	2,614
Total	61	6,191

Source: *Touristic guide-book of Lower Silesia*, 1989.

Table IX

Utilization of tourist facilities in Wrocław
 Utilisation de l'équipement touristique à Wrocław

Specification	Years		
	1980	1985	1989
Beds in tourist facilities	5,888	5,259	5,069
Users of beds available (in thousands)	346.0	313.6	287.2
Overnight stays (in thousands)	1,356.7	1,195.4	939.5

Source: *Year-book of Wrocław County*, 1990.

The socio-economic crisis of the country and a serious decrease in the standard of living has influenced tourist trends and the use tourist facilities. In the 1980s the number of persons using the accommodation decreased from 346,000 to 287,200 (a fall of about 17%) and number of overnight stays from 1,357 thousand to 940 thousand (a fall of about 31%).

In the second half of the 1980s the use of various tourist facilities declined, particularly after 1989 because of the introduction of the free market economy. The numbers visiting the Wrocław County Museums increased significantly during 1985—1988 from 670,000 to 1,083,000, largely in conjunction with the opening of the Raclawice Panorama. However, in 1989 a slight decrease in the number of visitors to 1,059,000 was also noted.

Audiences in theatres and musical institutions increased from 646,000 in 1985 to 669,000 in 1988, but then in 1989 decreased to 576,000.

The number of Polish Airlines "LOT" passengers using Wrocław

airport significantly increased between 1985—1988 (about +42%), but in 1989 decreased to the level of 1985 (Tab. X). The number of passengers taking on the River Odra in the vicinity of Wrocław in second half of the 1980s was in principle similar, that is, about 200,000 persons yearly (Tab. XI). The utilization of Botanical Garden was similar, some 350,000 a year.

Table X

Polish Airlines „LOT”
Lignes Aériennes Polonaises „LOT”

Specification	Passengers	
	departures from Wrocław	arrivals at Wrocław
Total:		
1985	35,501	37,306
1988	51,528	52,196
1989	37,219	37,123
Lines:		
Wrocław—Warsaw	36,683	36,695
other flights	536	428

Source: *Year-book of Wrocław County, 1990.*

Table XI

Passengers trips on Wrocław waterways (the Odra River)
Transport des passagers par les ports de Wrocław (le fleuve Oder)

Specification	Years		
	1985	1988	1989
Downstream river passengers (in thousands)	94.4	91.3	92.1
Upstream river passengers (in thousands)	94.4	91.3	92.1
Passengers in rented ships (in thousands)	7.9	7.8	7.0

Source: *Year-book of Wrocław County, 1990.*

An increasing tendency was visible only in the Zoological Garden where number of tickets sold during 1985—1989 increased about 52%.

For comparison, Table XII presents information about the number of beds in tourist facilities and their utilization in 8 large Polish sight-

seeing centres. The data show that Wrocław is in fourth position after Warsaw, Poznań and Cracow.

Table XII

Tourist facilities and their utilization in large Polish sightseeing centres
(current situation)

Equipement touristique et son utilisation dans les grands centres chorographiques
de la Pologne

Large sightseeing center	Number of inhabitants (in thousands)	Beds available	Number of visitors staying (in thousands)	Overnight stays (in thousands)
Gdańsk (1988)	461.5	4,674	191.4	580.2
Kraków (1989)	745.6	6,209	422.6	939.2
Lublin (1988)	339.5	2,741	117.8	288.4
Poznań (1989)	586.9	14,752	354.5	1 609.5
Szczecin (1988)	409.5	3,257	176.9	384.6
Toruń (1989)	200.9	1,770	83.7	162.0
Warszawa (1988)	1 651.2	13,014	710.8	16,500.4
Wrocław (1989)	642.3	5,069	287.2	939.5

Source: Year-books of counties (1989, 1990).

The material presented suggests that Wrocław and its region possesses abundant touristic attractions, adequate transportation accessibility and significant infrastructural base for tourism. These facilities are not fully used, particularly the accommodation available. This is obviously connected with the socio-economic crisis and the falling standard of living.

However, in future it is possible to expect an increase in domestic tourism and the development of foreign tourism. The improvement in tourist attractions, the amelioration of the infrastructural base, and the preparation of appropriate tourist advertising for the city should meet present requirements.

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30 października 1991 r.

RÉSUMÉ

Wrocław est l'un de grands centres chorographiques de la Pologne. La ville doit ses attraits touristiques à sa situation avantageuse au croisement des voies de communication, à ses valeurs touristiques et aux bases de couchage et gastronomique bien développées. Parmi les valeurs touristiques de distinguent les monuments de l'architecture et de la construction de classe européenne (l'hôtel de ville, la cathédrale, entre autres), les musées avec la peinture monumentale du Panorama de Racławice, les valeurs de paysage (la situation sur l'Odra et ses affluents, les ponts pittoresques, les parcs nombreux) et naturelles (le Jardin des plantes, le Jardin zoologique, le parc de Szczytniki).

Ainsi que dans tout le pays, dans les années quatre-vingts, le mouvement touristique lié à l'exploitation de la base de couchage a sensiblement baissé. Pendant une année, moins de 1 million de personnes ont loué leur place de couchage. Dans les autres objets touristiques, la baisse d'affluence était moins notable; dans le Jardin zoologique le nombre de visiteurs a considérablement augmenté. Chaque année les musées sont visités par plus d'un million de personnes. Le même nombre de visiteurs reçoivent ensemble le Jardin zoologique et le Jardin des plantes.

Parmi les plus grands centres chorographiques de la Pologne, eu égard à la grandeur de la base et du mouvement touristique, Wrocław se place au quatrième rang après Varsovie, Poznań et Cracovie.

Traduit par Lucjan Kowalski

STRESZCZENIE

Wrocław jest jednym z wielkich centrów krajoznawczych Polski. Na dużą atrakcyjność turystyczną miasta składają się: dogodne położenie na skrzyżowaniu szlaków komunikacyjnych, wysokie walory turystyczne oraz rozwinięta baza noclegowa i gastronomiczna. Wśród walorów turystycznych wyróżniają się europejskiej klasy

zabytki architektury i budownictwa (m. in. ratusz i katedra), obiekty muzealne z monumentalnym malowidłem Panoramy Racławickiej, walory krajobrazowe (położenie nad Odrą i jej dopływami, malownicze mosty, liczne parki) i przyrodnicze (Ogród Botaniczny, Ogród Zoologiczny, Park Szczytnicki).

Podobnie jak w całym kraju, w latach osiemdziesiątych znacznie obniżył się ruch turystyczny związany z wykorzystaniem bazy noclegowej. Liczba udzielonych noclegów w ciągu roku spadła poniżej 1 mln. W innych rodzajach obiektów turystycznych spadek frekwencji był mniej widoczny, a w Ogrodzie Zoologicznym liczba zwiedzających nawet znacznie wzrosła. Obiekty muzealne odwiedza rocznie ponad milion osób, podobną frekwencję mają również łącznie Ogród Zoologiczny i Ogród Botaniczny.

Z porównania wielkości bazy i ruchu turystycznego w grupie wielkich centrów krajoznawczych w Polsce wynika, że Wrocław zajmuje pod tym względem czwarte miejsce, po Warszawie, Poznaniu i Krakowie.